

Chapter No. 2067

19/SS01/R175

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 503***

Originated in Senate



Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 503

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE COMMENDATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE AND REMEMBERING THE OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT OF U.S. ARMY RESERVE SERGEANT RANDY SANDIFER OF PINOLA, MISSISSIPPI, WHO WAS NOMINATED FOR THE 2014 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMANITARIAN RESEARCH WHILE STATIONED IN THE WAR ZONE AT THE ABU GHRAIB FACILITY IN IRAQ.

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we remember the outstanding achievement of United States Army Reserve Sergeant Randy Sandifer of Pinola, Mississippi, in being nominated for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for research that helped close the doors of the Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq during the War on Terror; and

WHEREAS, when Army Reserve Sergeant Randy Sandifer of Pinola deployed to Iraq as a sophomore at Ole Miss, he did not realize he was on a journey that would take him not only overseas, but eventually would tie his name to one of the most prestigious honors in the world; and

WHEREAS, Sandifer, now 34 and a Ballistics Expert at the Army Crime Lab in Atlanta, was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for research he did while stationed at Abu Ghraib Prison, research

that ultimately would lead to the closure of the controversial facility. That year Pakistan's Malala Yousafzai and India's Kailash Satyarthi won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for their struggles for the rights and against the oppression of children; Sandifer's nomination stood through 2015; and

WHEREAS, Sandifer's job with the 412th Theater Engineer Command was actually to work as an Administrative Clerk. Having been a science buff at Piney Woods High School and knowing one day he would like to work in forensics, Sandifer volunteered to work in the lab, doing environmental testing on the land occupied by Abu Ghraib, where he not only worked, but where his unit stayed. "You can do environmental testing all day, but it is a difference when the consequence is closing down a prison such as Abu Ghraib. Especially in the context of what it meant to the United States, it was a blemish," Sandifer said; and

WHEREAS, the lab was testing for hydrocarbon levels in the soil, which affected the local water supply. "Just a small amount of hydrocarbon being in the soil can throw an ecosystem completely off," he explained. "Dealing with the Iraqis, and how they function, their ecosystem feeds directly to their livelihood because they raise livestock, farm, and they do so much in the environment they are in. They still live off the different rivers that run through there. While most people think of the War on Terror as being all about actual war, Sandifer said there was a rebuilding process all along, part of which was going on in the

lab. To Sandifer, that's what it was all about. It was more of a mindset of peace and humanitarianism, of having an impact without violence and making a difference, and we did." Another research project Sandifer worked on was designed to improve bridges and roads. A design he developed actually served to diffuse the damage done by improvised explosive devices, possibly saving untold numbers of lives; and

WHEREAS, Sandifer did all this without an engineering degree. Through advanced individual training and volunteering in the labs after hours, Sandifer ended up learning and teaching himself the necessary skills to support his mission. In 2006, he spoke to a group at Ole Miss about how detrimental it is not to be aware of our environmental footprint, based on his experiences cleaning up after Abu Ghraib. Sandifer said for he and his contemporaries, the mission to help rebuild and strengthen Iraq was also driven by patriotism; and

WHEREAS, now the expert firearms and toolmark examiner and graduate from Piney Woods School can say he has accomplished more by age 30 than he ever thought he would, not the least of which is the Nobel Peace Prize nomination. While Sandifer does not know what the future will bring, he is grateful for the chance at the honor and the road that led him there; and

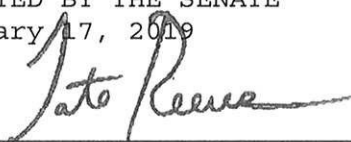
WHEREAS, Randy Sandifer is a wonderful example for Mississippi students and servicemen, and it is with great pride

that we commend his record of achievement and legacy of leadership to all in Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend United States Army Reserve Sergeant Randy Sandifer of Pinola, Mississippi, who was nominated for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for Environmental and Humanitarian Research while stationed in the War Zone at the Abu Ghraib Facility in Iraq and extend our best wishes to Randy and his family for future successes.

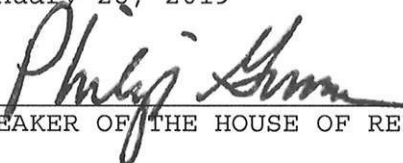
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Randy Sandifer and his family, forwarded to the Piney Woods School, the University of Mississippi, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 17, 2019



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 28, 2019



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES